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Unforeseen Tendencies of Democracy. By EDWIN L. GODKIN.

Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1898.—vii, 205 pp.

Mr. Godkin's exceedingly interesting essays, while nominally written from the cosmopolitan point of view, are in reality dominated by the influence of America, if not of New York alone. The democracy which he has continually in mind is the American democracy, as seen in its development in the American metropolis. For this reason he ascribes to democratic ideas in general the responsibility for all the tendencies of American public life. It may, of course, be true that the democracy of other countries will eventually show the same tendencies which the American democracy has already exhibited. At the same time it is to be remembered that American democracy developed under peculiar conditions—conditions which will probably never be present again.

American democracy developed at a time when population was sparse and means of communication, as compared with those of the present, were very primitive. Such conditions resulted in a decentralization in the administrative system, such, perhaps, as the world had never before seen. Combined with this administrative decentralization was a form of government based on a political philosophy which deified the idea of governmental checks and balances, fixed for all time in an almost unchangeable written constitution.

Such a system of government made effective political action extremely difficult. Under it the legislature was set up against the executive and the courts, while the central government was set up against the local government. If political paralysis—the inability to do anything—were not to ensue, some means had to be found for the harmonizing of these conflicting elements. Such a means was, as a matter of fact, found; but it had to be found outside of the governmental organization and in the political party. The party took upon its shoulders the burden of electing an executive that would enforce the expressed will of the legislature, and of securing the election or appointment of judges who would not permanently oppose the public will. The party had not only to busy itself with all the departments of the central government, but also to take care that the powers possessed by the local bodies, as a result of the decentralized administrative system, were not so exercised as to defeat the will of the people as a whole. The party was thus called upon in America to do more than was ever demanded of a party elsewhere. This is perhaps the reason why loyalty to party, which Mr. Godkin regards as such an extraordinary phenomenon, has been so highly prized in the United States. The people have instinctively felt that without

strong party organization their loosely framed and cumbersome governmental system would not give satisfaction. This is the reason why party politics have had such an influence on municipal government. This is why the "boss" has developed where he has in the United States — not in the government, as in England, but outside of it and in the party.

That the party has broken down under the load thus placed upon it, is not to be doubted. The present unsatisfactory system of nominations is ample evidence of that fact. But that the unsatisfactory character of our government is the fault of democracy is more than doubtful. This fact is proved by Mr. Godkin's book — almost unconsciously to the author — in the chapter on "The Australian Democracy." There it is shown that democracy in Australia developed under the influence of recent English political conditions. The whole governmental system is more concentrated than in the United States; and the result is, as Mr. Godkin says, that "the caucus ruled by the boss is hardly possible." Many of the "unforeseen tendencies" of democracy do not develop under such a governmental system. Many of these tendencies thus appear to be not so much the tendencies of the social and political conditions we call democracy as the tendencies of a certain form of governmental organization. For it cannot be said that Australian democracy is less democratic than the American democracy. As a matter of fact, the governmental system enjoyed by Australia — as well as by England itself — is in many respects more democratic than the governmental system in the United States. It certainly permits of a quicker execution of the public will. The truth is, that the American democracy lives under a governmental system established in an age which, as compared with the present, was aristocratic; and its tendencies are largely the results of its attempts to make that system conform to modern ideas. The failure as yet to achieve this end should not be ascribed to any fault in the democratic idea. Eventual success in the attempt will, it is to be hoped, do much to rehabilitate democracy in the minds of its critics.

FRANK J. GOODNOW.

La Questione dei negri. Di ENRICO MORSELLI. Torino, Fratelli Bocca, 1898. — 485 pp.

There are so many interesting features in Professor Morselli's study of the negro problem that one scarcely knows where to bestow praise or criticism in a short review. The reader is sure to be impressed with the author's breadth of view and with his appreciation of the political and social life, the sentiments and influences that